

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1438, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1438) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2002 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1750

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1750.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. DODD] proposes an amendment numbered 1750.

Mr. DODD. I ask unanimous consent further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To extend assistance to firefighters)

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1066. ASSISTANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS.

Section 33(e) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229(e)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(2) \$600,000,000 for fiscal year 2002.

“(3) \$800,000,000 for fiscal year 2003.

“(4) \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2004.”.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, very briefly, this amendment deals with the FIRE Act, a bill which we adopted in a previous Congress, providing assistance to departments—paid departments, volunteer departments, and combination departments for equipment and the like.

I see my colleague from Virginia rising.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, may I say that we worked together on this. I would like to be a cosponsor of this amendment.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my colleague be added as a cosponsor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, let me take a second and commend our two colleagues from Michigan and from Virginia, the Chairman and Ranking Member. Only a few months ago, those roles were reversed; the chairman was

from Virginia and the ranking member was from Michigan. This is a great team which has done a tremendous job. It is sort of a seamless garment in many ways, in terms of their leadership on national security issues as the chairman and ranking members of the Armed Services Committee.

I want to take a moment to commend them both for the spectacular job they have done over the last 2½ weeks since the great tragedy on September 11. Not only have they led in terms of moving their committee product along and offering us an opportunity to do something very constructive and positive in responding to the events of September 11, but also in their public commentary on this issue both here on the floor of the Senate as well as in the public forums. The Senator from Michigan, CARL LEVIN, and the Senator from Virginia, JOHN WARNER, have truly lived up to the spirit of those who in other times of crisis have led without partisanship and with a sense of unity. I think it has been reassuring to the American public to have both of them in the positions they are in.

On the subject at hand, I have 15 minutes, so I will try to be brief. I thank the Senator from Michigan and the Senator from Virginia for being supportive of this effort. In fact, in many ways, without their leadership and support on this very matter, we would not have ever adopted the FIRE Act.

Very simply put, this legislation allows for fire departments across this country—some 30,000 of them, paid volunteers and combined departments—to seek Federal grants for training and equipment to assist them in doing a better job in responding to tragedies in our local communities.

I don't need to make this case. I suppose I could end my remarks there. There is not a single person in this country who is not aware of the heroic efforts of our fire departments, not only within the city of New York, which, of course, suffered the greatest tragedy when it came to the loss of life, not only of civilian populations but also firefighters, but also here in the Nation's Capital and the departments in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia.

On a parochial note, if you will, some of the first departments to respond to the tragedy at the World Trade Center came from my home State of Connecticut. I note the presence of the Presiding Officer, the Senator from New Jersey. I know, in fact, many of the people from his State as well responded to this catastrophe, the savage attacks in New York City. I don't need to make the case about how valuable these men and women are in the job they do. I think we become aware that—despite our traditional thinking about fire departments, with sort of the Dalmatian dog in the front seat

and responding to the residential or small business fire—today they are asked to become basically soldiers. The distinction between what they do and what the men and women in military uniforms do—the lines are becoming blurred somewhat here. No greater piece of evidence can I offer than that which occurred on September 11.

Some may say: What are you doing offering a fire amendment on the Department of Defense authorization? One, this is where the bill was born. As a result of the leadership of the two men I have mentioned already. This bill became law in conference. I offered the bill here, but without them this bill would not have become the law of the land. In a sense, now to extend the authorization over the next several years with a relatively small amendment for this fiscal year, increasing over the next 3 years so that we can provide assistance to these departments, I think is critical and important.

With that, let me explain what is in the bill. Many of us in the Senate and in the Congress have long understood that America's firefighters make extraordinary contributions to their communities. But on September 11, of course, we got a glimpse of a larger role these men and women of the fire service play. The national security role of firefighters has become readily apparent to all in this country.

On the morning of September 11, the men and women of the New York City Fire Department came to the aid of the entire Nation. They charged in to rescue people from every region of our country and more than 40 nations around the globe. Those firefighters raced into that building to save the lives of people trapped in those two towers. On the same morning, firefighters from Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia became domestic defenders, responsible for coordinating a response to an attack on the headquarters of our armed services, the Pentagon itself.

If there was ever any question that the firefighters who wear the uniforms of local agencies are from time to time called upon to serve as partners with the men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. military, those questions I think have been laid to rest forever. The sad new reality is that when terrorists target civilian populations on American soil, we are going to need, more than ever, our rescue services to be as well equipped as they possibly can be.

I have mentioned fire departments and, obviously, police departments. This bill covers emergency medical teams as well, EMS services. Again, they responded in heroic fashion from Virginia, Maryland, DC, New Jersey, Connecticut and, of course, New York. Many of us went to ground zero in New York City. Many colleagues met people